

## EDITORIALS

### WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE CHILD?

"In carrying forward a program of health education, the school becomes organized to do for the child what was formerly done in the home. In this field the school takes over parental responsibilities in precisely the same way that it has in the field of household and industrial arts."—Jesse Feiring Williams, Hygeia, September, 1923.

That the educational departments of our country have been planning for some time to take over the parental responsibilities in the care of children has been perfectly obvious to those who read the signs of the times. Recently a number of writers on so-called health education of school children have come out quite frankly and emphatically in claiming this right. A number of speakers at the National Educational Association conference in San Francisco brought forward this idea, of the department of education's assuming sponsorship for the development of children and relieving the parents of that responsibility; and at least one of these speakers was challenged at the time.

The quotation at the head of this article is another from a responsible source, and it shows the real object of a large element of the educational influences of our country. If many statements of this character come out through a variety of sources, it is likely that the ultimate program will be defeated, because we are fully persuaded that the American public are not yet ready to make motherhood an incubator scheme and the home a dormitory for the rearing of children under the guidance of Federal, State or any other kind of legal machinery.

### COMMUNITY CHESTS

The Journal has many requests from physicians and others to discuss both sides of the "Community Chest" movement. Advocates of the movement are numerous and the points in favor of it have been given the widest possible circulation in all parts of the country.

Persons interested in the other side of the question may secure an interesting pamphlet by addressing P. O. Box 1455, Pittsburgh, Pa. This pamphlet was prepared by a committee of twenty-six important persons who spent a great deal of time studying the question when it was proposed to make Pittsburgh a "Chest" city. Additional information may be had from many chambers of commerce in cities that have not endorsed the plan.

The pamphlet in question says among other things that:

"The Community Financial Federation tends to make charity a machine, to stifle individual philanthropy, to abridge the rights of both the donors and the agencies, and its few advantages do not constitute adequate compensation for the disadvantages of the plan.

"The Community Chest penalizes the strong

and successful societies by interfering with their initiative and by capitalizing their good name and record of efficiency to the advantage of inefficient organizations, thus enabling these less worthy agencies to be financed and perpetuated through the standing and successful record of the strong and thoroughly tested organizations instead of requiring each to justify its right to exist by developing its own supporting constituency on the strength of service performed.

"Some Community Chests are becoming monopolies in the handling of public charity. They are heading in the direction of gigantic charity trusts. While in some cities the Chest is as yet a benevolent and only mildly autocratic trust, in others it is fast developing into a dominating and thoroughly autocratic body. This is particularly true in the large number of cities where the Chest is failing to raise the required amount. The acid test of its relationship to the participating agencies comes when the fund it raises is insufficient for the requirements. Fair weather does not test the staunchness of the ship.

"In several Chest cities representatives of important participating agencies complain that the executive committee of the Chest is rapidly becoming a super-governing body, determining the scope of the work of the agencies and increasingly exercising authority over them, treating as wards or dependents agencies which, through a successful history of many years, have efficiently and economically conducted their work. . . .

"The nation-wide promotion of the Community Chest plan seems to be very largely fostered by the American Committee for Community Organization, which is composed, to a very large extent, of Community Chest paid officials. . . .

"The Community Chest plan is virtually a violation of the fundamental principle of religious liberty in that it compels a donor to give to the support of agencies established and controlled by religious bodies with whose methods and aims he may not be in sympathy. The so-called privilege of 'designations of gifts' by means of which some Chest committees seek to meet this situation, is a delusion in that no matter what may be the aggregate amount of gifts which are designated for an agency, it gets only the amount allotted to it in the Chest budget. . . .

"The leading officer of an important participating agency in a Chest city in the West makes the following statement: 'With us the Chest has yet to make good. It has not altogether protected the giving public from "more than one solicitation during the year." It has not yet given the participating organizations 100 per cent of their actual allocations. It is undertaking, however, to do this by "juggling the calendar"—i. e., by shortening the year 1922 to nine months and starting the next Chest year October 1, 1922, instead of January 1, 1923. It does not take much of a mathematician to figure out that this adds 25 per cent to the amount the donor must give. With us the Chest has not reduced the cost of getting money, nor has it provided more money for the participating organizations.'

"Just as Municipal, State and Federal Govern-